

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **UTAH RECEIVES \$175,000 FROM USDA IN EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM FUNDING**

Salt Lake City, May 23, 2005 -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns announced that USDA will begin issuing payments of \$175,000 in Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) funding to Cache County due to flooding. This funding is provided by the 2005 Emergency Hurricane Supplemental Appropriations Act, signed by President Bush on Oct. 13, 2004, under which \$150 million is authorized for ECP.

"This is one of several conservation programs that provide funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate and strengthen environmental stewardship of their lands," Johanns said. "These new ECP funds will be used to help farmers and ranchers rehabilitate farmland damaged by flood and other natural disasters in recent years."

The ECP program gives producers additional resources to remove debris from farmland, restore fences and conservation structures, provide water for livestock in drought situations and grade and shape farmland damaged by a natural disaster. The program is administered by FSA's state and county committees. Locally-elected county

committees are authorized to implement ECP for all disasters except drought, which is authorized at the national office of FSA. Eligible producers will receive cost-share assistance of up to 75 percent of the cost of the approved practice, as determined by FSA county committees.

Producers should check with their local FSA offices regarding ECP sign-up periods, which are set by the county FSA committees. For a producer's land to be eligible, the disaster must create new conservation problems that, if untreated, would impair or endanger the land and affect its productive capacity. Conservation problems existing prior to the applicable disaster are ineligible for ECP assistance.

USDA offers additional programs to help farmers and ranchers recover from damages caused by natural disasters. These programs include the Emergency Loan Program, Federal Crop Insurance and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program.

More information on ECP and other disaster assistance programs is available at local FSA offices and online at: <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.